

have been attacked and killed by other school-age children. The last thing our city needs is more guns on our streets and more children fearing for their safety.

Recently, the United States Supreme Court agreed to review *McDonald v. City of Chicago*, a case that challenges whether Chicago's local handgun ban is legal. In a time of national concern over senseless and deadly attacks, it is a concern.

Since 1983, it has been illegal to purchase or own a handgun within Chicago city limits. Over the course of that 26 years, Chicago has seen the number of registered handguns drop. Guns have become scarcer, saving lives and creating safer neighborhoods in the process.

As we work to make our cities and communities safer, there are many additional things we could and should fight for. I stand ready to work with the administration to reinstate the assault weapons ban and ready to work with this body to close the gun show loophole.

But in the absence of Federal action, it is critical that we preserve the rights of the people to protect their children and their families at the local level.

RECOGNIZING OCTOBER AS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Madam Speaker, October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, a time to remember the victims of this terrible and often hidden crime and also a time to renew our commitment to eliminating it.

I recently had the privilege of participating in the dedication ceremony for a new Peace Garden at Cornerstone Shelter in my district. The garden honors both the victim of the crime as well as those people committed to restoring hope for those who have experienced domestic violence. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety has reported that 70,000 primary victims have received services from battered women's shelters and domestic abuse agencies in 2008 alone.

Thankfully, we have organizations like Cornerstone who provide needed assistance and resources to victims while working to end domestic violence as a whole. When we bring the light of truth to an issue like domestic abuse, its power to destroy decreases.

It's important that we remember the victims of domestic violence and let them know they are not alone as we fight to make the world a better place.

RECOGNIZING THE PASSING OF CONGRESSMAN JAY JOHNSON

(Mr. KAGEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KAGEN. Madam Speaker, like everyone else in northeast Wisconsin, I am shocked and saddened by the passing of my friend, former Congressman Jay Johnson. Jay represented the Eighth District of Wisconsin in this body from January of 1997 to January 1999.

Jay was a friend of mine. He was a gentle person, and everyone in northeast Wisconsin was considered his friend as well. He served the best interests of all of our families and will be greatly missed.

For many years, Jay's trusted voice and kind countenance came into all of our homes as a news anchor on WFRV-TV and WLUK-TV in Green Bay. His colleagues in this room here all recall how kind he was. His colleagues in the newsroom in Green Bay recalled his kind heart, his unending patience, and his grand sense of humor. They will remember him as a gentleman in every sense of the world.

It's clear from his life spent in front of the camera and here in public service that he truly loved people.

In 2000, President Clinton appointed Jay to be director of the United States Mint; and more recently, he ran Jay Johnson Coins and Consulting.

During my service here, Jay had been a mentor, an adviser, and a close friend. On behalf of the people of the Eighth District of Wisconsin, I want to thank Jay for his service and extend my deepest sympathies to his wife, JoLee, their family and friends.

PROTECT SMALL BUSINESS FROM BIG GOVERNMENT

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, small businesses are doing all they can to create jobs and bring our economy back to life. Unfortunately in Washington, Democrats have decided to scheme new taxes and mandates as a part of their Big Government takeover of the health care system. With 263,000 more jobs lost last month, it is shocking that Democrats believe now is the time to punish small business that creates the majority of jobs in America.

The National Federation of Independent Business has revealed the Big Government Democrat health takeover would cost 1.6 million jobs in the United States. Destroying jobs will make it harder, not easier, for individuals to afford health care.

We need H.R. 3400 to target reforms to our health insurance system, like shopping for plans across State lines, association health plans for small businesses, and tax credits for individuals to purchase insurance.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

HEALTH CARE AND TRANSPARENCY

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, it's now been over 5 months since the White House announced numerous deals with major stakeholders in the health care debate. Little or no details regarding these negotiations have been released. And last week during the Finance Committee hearings in the other body, a plan for a commission to slow the growth of Medicare spending was revealed. But it was then revealed that the hospitals would be exempt from this commission because, according to Congress Daily, they had already negotiated a cost-cutting agreement with the White House.

You know, despite the rhetoric of last fall, then-candidate Obama's promise to make all health care reform negotiation public, we still have very few details on what exactly was agreed to during these highly publicized but very secret meetings last May. How can Congress do its due diligence in creating policy before us without the crucial details? More importantly, how can the American public know what we are doing is indeed in their best interest?

In January of this year, we were promised an administration that would bring all parties together; we were promised an administration that would not negotiate behind closed doors and in fact would be broadcasting these negotiations on C-SPAN so that the American people could see for themselves what the choices were.

When will these cease to become promises and become reality?

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRESS NEEDS TO STEP UP TO THE PLATE FOR SENIORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, my colleagues, yesterday I had the privilege to be in the heart of my district in Waterbury, Connecticut, to meet with a group of seniors, very concerned and active seniors. They call themselves the Silver Waves. And

through letters and phone calls and emails and thousands of one-on-one conversations throughout the greater Waterbury area, they have been able to gather over 300 signatures on the petition that I am holding right here expressing why they believe that this Congress has to start paying attention to the very real economic pressures that seniors in this economy and in this country are facing and why, in particular, we need to step up to the plate and do the right thing for seniors who are about to face a zero percent increase on Social Security in this country.

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Madam Speaker, I'm here to bring these petitions to my colleagues because I couldn't agree with them more.

This economic downturn has hit all of us, but it has hit seniors in particular. Just like many Americans, they have mortgages to pay, they've got car payments to make, and they've got grocery bills to pay. But unlike many Americans, they also face disproportionately high health care costs, unusually high prescription-drug costs, and multiple bills that seem only to be rising. Put that together with decreased retirement funds, and seniors are facing a particularly tough forecast.

Now over the past year, this Congress has tried to take some steps to pull this economy up from the depths of the recession. We've acted to make sure that our financial system didn't collapse. We've moved quickly to make critical investments in our economy to help it recover. We're working now to try to make this health care system work for both our customers, our patients and also for our economy. But in all of this, we have to remember that seniors throughout this country face economic challenges that are unique only to them, and as we continue to work on getting our entire economy to recover, we have to remember that we have to specifically target seniors, most of which are living on fixed incomes today.

Now the impetus behind these petitions is a very real sense from the senior citizens in my district, which I think is reflective of a feeling across this country, that over the past decade or so, they've watched Washington dole out special favors to the insurance companies, to the drug companies, to the oil companies and to the banks. And they're wondering where the help is for them. And in the middle of this tough economic recession, just when they're waiting for the help to come to them, they get some of the worst news of all, that they will be receiving a zero percent increase in their Social Security check.

Now that's why we need to listen to the people who have signed these petitions, because this number is 3,000 in Waterbury, Connecticut, but it would be millions across the country of seniors who want to know why a formula

designed to reflect the true cost of living increases for them gives them a zero percent increase when they know that their costs are increasing on a regular basis, and why they can't get Congress to step up to the plate and help them when it seems like over the past decade, a lot of other people with a lot more influence and a lot more power than them have been helped.

So I'm here to deliver these petitions and to say "thank you" to people like Lucille Keating, Jeannine Laliberte, Lorraine Johnston and Lida Keroski, who put these together, and assure them not only do I agree with the sentiment they and so many Americans have brought to this House, but that I believe we are going to take seriously the notion that in this very difficult economy we need to step up to the plate and do the right thing for seniors in this country.

HALLOWEEN HEALTH CARE

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the Senate's Halloween health care bill seeped out of the dark dungeons of the Capitol Building today. News reports say it's 1,500 pages long. Why is legislation drafted in the secret, dark caverns of the Capitol, where the trolls roam at night, void of public view? Is it so scary the healthcrats don't want us to know what's in it?

We need to know exactly what's in these bills and how much they really cost before we vote on anything. And why is there such a rush to pass a bill anyway? Maybe they have frightening parts that no one will see if quickly passed. One scary part is the government wanting American money now. You see, new taxes take effect immediately, but the legislation won't be in operation until 2013. That's right. American taxpayers pay 3 years of new taxes on a deal that doesn't take effect for 3 years. Now isn't that scary?

And what is the goal of this government bill? If the goal is to provide universal health care for everyone, the bill is a failure. The President told us there are 30 million uninsured. The Congressional Budget Office said the latest and greatest bill still will leave 25 million uninsured. So we're letting the government take over health care just to add 5 million people to the government system. It would be cheaper just to buy them all health insurance and then require proof of citizenship to get insurance rather than spend trillions and let Uncle Sam take care of us all.

If the goal of the Halloween health care bill is to provide better quality care, the bill is a failure. Just look at the way the government runs the Indian universal health care system. The government has been committing medical malpractice against the Indians for decades. If the goal is to make health care cheaper, the bill fails again. The bill will cost over \$1 trillion just to set it up. And the idea that government can run an entire health care system cheaper than the private sector

is a myth. The only way that government can do it cheaper is to drastically cut services to patients, ration care or both.

Madam Speaker, has there ever been a government program that costs less than projected? I don't think that has happened in the history of the Republic.

If the goal is to make government-run Halloween health care more efficient, the bill fails once more. The government is almost always more inefficient because it has no competition, has no accountability, and when it runs out of money, it just spends more money and taxes the taxpayer.

However, if the real goal of this legislation is to have government take control of our health care, the bill is a total success.

The Halloween health care nightmare on Capitol Hill is this specific provision—government takeover of health care. So rather than let the government take care of us all, Congress should reform specific problems under our current system. Allow insurance to be purchased across State lines, provide for a safety net for catastrophic injury or illness, have a method to allow people with preexisting conditions to obtain insurance, allow for health savings accounts so people can take care of themselves and get a tax break, provide tax incentives and tax breaks for businesses who take care of their employees rather than more taxes on small businesses, which taxes them to death, and eliminate the fraud, waste and abuse in the Medicaid system.

And, Madam Speaker, there are many other specific things Congress should do. But turning over America's health to the Federal Government is unhealthy for the American people. Such an idea is truly a Halloween nightmare and a trick on the American people.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

U.S. DEFICIT BIGGEST SINCE 1945

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, I would like to share with the House tonight some writings from the October 16, 2009, CNNMoney.com. The title is, "U.S. Deficit Biggest Since 1945."

"The Obama administration on Friday said the government ran a \$1.42 trillion deficit in fiscal year 2009. That made it the worst year on record since World War II, according to data from the Treasury and the White House Office of Management and Budget. Tax